

Introduced by Senator Kehoe
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Nava)

March 21, 2006

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 107—Relative to the Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 107, as introduced, Kehoe. Homeland security: emergency services.

Under existing law, the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission is established in state government by action of the Governor to investigate the circumstances surrounding the October 2003 fires in southern California and that commission recommended the establishment of a permanent Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security.

This measure would create the Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security, with specified membership of each house of the Legislature. The joint committee would be constituted as an investigating committee of the houses, and its powers would include making recommendations as to legislation and forming technical advisory committees to assist it in carrying out its duties. The joint committee would continue in existence until November 30, 2006.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, California is the site of some of the most
- 2 extraordinary natural disasters in North America, including fires,

1 earthquakes, floods, landslides, mudslides, insect infestations,
2 and drought; and

3 WHEREAS, California is the nation's most populous state,
4 home to many of the nation's most desirable tourist destinations,
5 and home to many of the nation's most critical military
6 installations, and as such California is especially sensitive to the
7 threat of terrorism; and

8 WHEREAS, In October 2003, southern California experienced
9 the most devastating wild land/urban interface fire in the history
10 of California; nearly 740,000 acres burned, 246 people were
11 injured, and 24 Californians lost their lives, including one
12 firefighter, and more than 3,600 homes, 36 commercial
13 properties, and 1,169 outbuildings were destroyed; and

14 WHEREAS, On November 2, 2003, then-Governor Gray
15 Davis and then-Governor-elect Arnold Schwarzenegger
16 established a Blue Ribbon Fire Commission representing federal,
17 state, and local agencies, the firefighting community, and
18 affected communities; and

19 WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Fire Commission was charged
20 with hearing testimony on what worked and what did not work in
21 the efforts to fight the October 2003 fires and with reviewing and
22 providing recommendations on necessary improvements to
23 prevent and better respond to these fires in the future; and

24 WHEREAS, The commission, in its report to the Governor,
25 made a number of recommendations and prioritized their
26 importance, including the establishment of a permanent Joint
27 Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland
28 Security; and

29 WHEREAS, The joint committee has explored the report of
30 the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission and has taken action in
31 support of the commission's findings and recommendations; and

32 WHEREAS, The members of the joint committee recognize
33 that the work of the joint committee needs to continue; now,
34 therefore, be it

35 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
36 *thereof concurring*, That the Joint Legislative Committee on
37 Emergency Services and Homeland Security is hereby
38 established; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That the joint committee shall consist of 18
40 members, who shall include nine Assembly Members appointed

1 by the Speaker of the Assembly, five from the party having the
2 largest number of Members in the Assembly and four from the
3 party having the second largest number of Members, and nine
4 Senators appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, five from
5 the party having the largest number of Members in the Senate
6 and four from the party having the second largest number of
7 Members; and be it further

8 *Resolved*, That the joint committee shall be under the direction
9 of a chairperson and vice chairperson that shall alternate between
10 the Assembly and the Senate from session to session and that
11 initially the joint committee shall be under the direction of a
12 Senate Chairperson and an Assembly Vice Chairperson,
13 appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules and the Speaker of
14 the Assembly, respectively; and be it further

15 *Resolved*, That the joint committee may provide a public
16 forum for discussion of California's emergency services and
17 homeland security and related issues to natural or human-caused
18 threats to California; and be it further

19 *Resolved*, That the joint committee, in order to assist it in
20 carrying out its duties, may form technical advisory committees,
21 including representatives from the public safety and emergency
22 services disciplines, to help evaluate federal, state, and local
23 strategies, provide technical assistance on an ongoing basis, and
24 take active roles in supporting the passage of any necessary
25 legislation; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the joint committee may work in cooperation
27 with the Governor and the standing committees and
28 subcommittees of the Legislature to address the level of support
29 necessary for public safety and related agencies to implement
30 essential emergency services and homeland security policies; and
31 be it further

32 *Resolved*, That the joint committee may periodically report its
33 progress and make recommendations to the Governor and the
34 Legislature; and be it further

35 *Resolved*, That the joint committee and its members shall have
36 and exercise all of the rights, duties, and powers conferred upon
37 investigating committees and their members by the Joint Rules of
38 the Assembly and Senate as they are adopted and amended from
39 time to time, which provisions are incorporated herein and made
40 applicable to this committee and its members; and be it further

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Senate Committee on Rules may make
2 moneys available from the Senate Operating Fund, as it deems
3 necessary, to pay expenses of the joint committee and its
4 members, and that any expenditure of moneys shall be made in
5 compliance with policies set forth by the Senate Committee on
6 Rules and shall be subject to the approval of the Senate
7 Committee on Rules; and be it further
8 *Resolved*, That the joint committee is authorized to act until
9 November 30, 2006, when its existence shall terminate; and be it
10 further
11 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
12 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.